AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Listing of Claims

1. (currently amended) An apparatus for controlling communication-access between a computer network and either a computer or a modem that has a given port for bi-directional communication by the computer or the modem with the network, the apparatus comprising

~~an~~ a discrete access-prevention device ~~having~~ consisting of ~~a control terminal,~~ a first connector for connection to the given port, a second connector for connection to the network, ~~and~~ electrically powered switching means connected in series between the first and second connectors and operable in response to a given control signal for preventing receipt by the first connector of any network communications from the second connector and/or for preventing receipt by the second connector of any network communications from the first ~~connector;~~ connector, and a control terminal connected to the switching means for providing said given control signal to the switching means from an external source.

2. (original) An apparatus according to Claim 1 further comprising manually actuated means for providing said given control signal to the switching means.

3. (original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising a power terminal connected to the switching means for providing electrical power to the switching means from an external source.

4. (original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising

a control device connected to the control terminal for automatically controlling the switching means of the access-prevention device in response to a given measured interval exceeding a predetermined duration to prevent the first connector from receiving any network communications from the second connector and/or to prevent the second connector from receiving any network communications from the first connector.

5. (currently amended) An apparatus ~~according to Claim 4,~~ for controlling communication-access between a computer network and either a computer or a modem that has a given port for bi-directional communication by the computer or the modem with the network, the apparatus comprising

an access-prevention device having a first connector for connection to the given port, a second connector for connection to the network, electrically powered switching means connected in series between the first and second connectors and operable in response to a given control signal for preventing receipt by the first connector of any network communications from the second connector and/or for preventing receipt by the second connector of any network communications from the first connector, and a control terminal connected to the switching means for providing said given control signal to the switching means from an external source; and

a control device connected to the control terminal for automatically controlling the switching means of the access-prevention device in response to a given measured interval exceeding a predetermined duration to prevent the first connector from receiving any network communications from the second connector and/or to prevent the second

connector from receiving any network communications from the first connector;

wherein the control device comprises:

sensing means for sensing whether or not an operator is present within a predetermined space adjacent the computer; and

means coupled to the sensing means for measuring each interval when an operator is not present within said predetermined space and for providing said given control signal to the control terminal whenever the measured interval exceeds a predetermined duration;

wherein said automatic control of the access-prevention device is in response to said given control signal.

6. (original) An apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein the control device comprises:

a timer, including means for selecting a predetermined duration, means for measuring an interval beginning upon actuation of the timer and means for providing said given control signal to the control terminal whenever the measured interval exceeds the predetermined duration;

wherein said automatic control of the access-prevention device is in response to said given control signal.

7. (original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the switching means is connected only for preventing the first connector from receiving any network communication from the second connector.

8. (original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the switching means is connected only for preventing the second connector from receiving any network communication from the first connector.

9. (original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the switching means is connected for preventing any network communication between the first connector and the second connector.

10. (currently amended) An apparatus for controlling communication-access between a computer network and either a computer or a modem that has a given port for bi-directional communication by the computer or the modem with the network, the apparatus comprising

~~an~~ a discrete access-prevention device ~~having~~ consisting of a first connector for connection to the given port, a second connector for connection to the network, and switching means connected in series between the first and second connectors for preventing receipt by the first connector of any network communications from the second connector and/or for preventing receipt by the second connector of any network communications from the first connector; and

a control device for controlling the switching means of the access-prevention device to selectively prevent the first connector from receiving any network communications from the second connector and/or to selectively prevent the second connector from receiving any network communications from the first connector.

11. (currently amended) ~~A system~~ Apparatus for controlling communication-access within a computer network to a given computer that has a given port for bi-directional communication by the given computer with another computer within the network, said apparatus comprising:

~~a computer having a given port for bi-directional communication by the computer with another computer within the network;~~

an access-prevention device connected in series with the given port for preventing the given computer from receiving and/or transmitting any communications from and/or to said another computer within the network; and

a control device for controlling the access-prevention device;

wherein the access-prevention device is disposed within a chassis that contains the given computer.

12. (currently amended) ~~A system~~ Apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein the control device is disposed on said chassis.

13. (currently amended) ~~A system~~ Apparatus according to Claim 11, further comprising a keyboard connected to the given computer for controlling operation of the given computer;

wherein the control device includes the keyboard.

14. (currently amended) ~~A system~~ Apparatus according to Claim 11, further comprising a mouse connected to the given computer for controlling operation of the given computer;

wherein the control device includes the mouse.

15. (currently amended) ~~A system~~ Apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein the control device comprises a manually operable remote-control device for transmitting a given control signal; and

wherein the access-prevention device is controlled in response to said given control signal.

16. (currently amended) ~~An apparatus~~ Apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein the control device comprises:

sensing means for sensing whether or not an operator is present within a predetermined space adjacent the given computer; and

means coupled to the sensing means for measuring each interval when an operator is not present within said predetermined space and for providing a given control signal whenever the measured interval exceeds a predetermined duration;

wherein said automatic control of the access-prevention device is in response to said given control signal.

17. (currently amended) ~~An apparatus~~ Apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein the control device comprises:

means for measuring each interval when the given computer is not performing a routine in response to an input received from an input device connected directly to the given computer and for providing a given control signal whenever the measured interval exceeds a predetermined duration;

wherein said control of the access-prevention device is in response to said given control signal.

18. (currently amended) ~~A system for controlling communication access within~~ Within a computer network that includes a given computer having a given port for bi-directional communication by the given computer with another computer within the network, and a modem connected to the given port for processing said bi-directional communication by the given computer with said another computer within the network, apparatus for controlling communication-access between the given computer and said another computer, comprising:

~~a computer having a given port for bi-directional communication by the computer with another computer within the network;~~

~~a modem connected to the given port for processing said bi-directional communication by the computer with another computer within the network;~~

an access-prevention device connected in series with the given port and the modem for preventing the given computer from receiving and/or transmitting any communications from and/or to said another computer within the network; and

a control device for controlling the access-prevention device;

wherein the access-prevention device is disposed within a chassis that contains the modem.

19. (currently amended) ~~A system~~ Apparatus according to Claim 18, wherein the control device is disposed on the chassis that contains the modem.

20. (currently amended) ~~A system~~ Apparatus according to Claim 18, wherein the control device comprises a manually operable remote-control device for transmitting a given control signal; and

wherein said control of the access-prevention device is in response to said given control signal.

21. (currently amended) ~~A system for controlling communication access within~~ Within a computer network that includes a given computer having a given port for bi-directional communication by the given computer with another computer within the network, and an external network-access terminal connected in series with the given port for enabling said bi-directional communication by the given computer with another computer within the network, apparatus for controlling communication-access between the given computer and said another computer, comprising:

~~a computer having a given port for bi-directional communication by the computer with another computer within the network;~~

~~an external network access terminal for enabling said bi-directional communication by the computer with another computer within the network;~~

an access-prevention device connected in series with the given port and the external network-access terminal for preventing the given computer from receiving and/or transmitting any communications from and/or to said another computer within the network; and

a control device for controlling the access-prevention device;

~~wherein the given port is connected in series with the external access terminal for~~

~~enabling said bi-directional communication with the network; and~~

wherein the access-prevention device is disposed within a housing that contains the external network-access terminal.

22. (currently amended) ~~A system~~ Apparatus according to Claim 21, wherein the control device is disposed on the housing that contains the external network-access terminal.

23. (currently amended) ~~A system~~ Apparatus according to Claim 21, wherein the control device comprises a manually operable remote-control device for transmitting a given control signal; and

wherein said control of the access-prevention device is in response to said given control signal.

24. (currently amended) ~~A system for controlling communication access within~~ Within a computer network that includes a given computer having a given port for bi-directional communication by the given computer with another computer within the network, and an external firewall device connected to the given port for providing firewall protection for the given computer, apparatus for controlling communication-access between the given computer and said another computer, comprising:

~~a computer having a given port for bi-directional communication by the computer with another computer within the network;~~

~~an external firewall device connected to the given port for providing firewall~~

~~protection for the given computer;~~

an access-prevention device connected in series with the given port and the external firewall device for preventing the given computer from receiving and/or transmitting any communications from and/or to said another computer within the network; and

a control device for controlling the access-prevention device;

wherein the access-prevention device is disposed within a housing that contains the external firewall device.

25. (currently amended) ~~A system~~ Apparatus according to Claim 24, wherein the control device is disposed on the housing that contains the external firewall device.

26. (currently amended) ~~A system~~ Apparatus according to Claim 24, wherein the control device comprises a manually operable remote-control device for transmitting a given control signal; and

wherein said control of the access-prevention device is in response to said given control signal.